

K R A S K I N, L E S S E & C O S S O N, L L P
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

ORIGINAL

2120 L Street, N.W., Suite 520
Washington, D.C. 20037

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Telephone (202) 296-8890
Telecopier (202) 296-8893

October 4, 2002

RECEIVED

OCT - 4 2002

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W., Room TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: In the Matter of: Nomination for Universal Service
Administrative Company Board of Directors
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to the Commission's Public Notice of September 9, 2002, DA 02-2206, the Rural Independent Competitive Alliance ("RICA") nominates Rick Vergin for appointment as the member of the Board of Directors of the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC") representing competitive local exchange carriers. Mr. Vergin is Chief Executive Officer of CTC Telcom, a rural facilities-based competitive local exchange carrier ("CLEC") headquartered in Dallas, Wisconsin. Mr. Vergin is also President of RICA, the national association representing rural CLECs, with more than 75 members. A brief history of Mr. Vergin's relevant work experience is attached.

RICA believes it to be very important that the CLEC representative on the USAC Board come from a company, such as CTC Telcom, which is an eligible telecommunications carrier and a recipient of universal service support, as well as a contributor. Many RICA-member rural CLECs have obtained ETC status and are receiving or expect to receive support. Of sixty CETCs listed in USAC's fourth quarter 2002 support projections, fifteen (25 percent) are RICA members.

Rural CLECs, by definition, operate in low density, high cost areas where the effective and efficient administration of universal service support by USAC is of most concern. As facilities-based carriers, RICA members have brought substantial benefits in the form of improved quality and grade of service, including access to advanced services, which would otherwise be unavailable in their communities. Accomplishment of these goals of the Communications Act has required capital investment at a level substantially above that required for urban service. Sound management of USAC is thus a central concern of RICA members, such as CTC Telcom. Because rural CLECs also contribute to the funds administered by USAC, it is in their interest as well that USAC's administrative expenses be no higher than necessary to properly fulfill its duties.

No. of Copies rec'd _____
List ABCDE

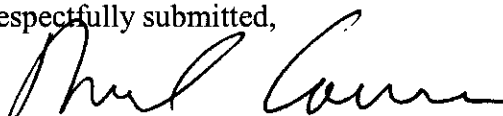
044

Mr. Vergin has extensive experience in organization management, budgeting and finance, and the Commission's rules regarding universal service support. Mr. Vergin also has worked closely with several schools in CTC Telcom's service area with respect to implementation of the programs administered by the Schools and Libraries Division of USAC.

In short, Mr. Vergin is uniquely qualified to make a substantial contribution to the effective oversight of USAC.

Please contact me if there are any questions in regard to this nomination.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Cosson', written over the typed name.

David Cosson

Counsel to Rural Independent Competitive Alliance

Attachment

cc: Chairman Powell
Commissioner Abernathy
Commissioner Copps
Commissioner Martin
William Maher
Sheryl Todd (2 copies), Telecommunications Access Policy Division

Rick Vergin

CEO, CTC Telcom

Rick Vergin is the Chief Executive Officer of CTC Telcom, a facilities-based competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) with headquarters in Dallas, Wisconsin. CTC Telcom provides competitive local telephone, long distance, video services and other telecommunications services in three communities in northwest Wisconsin.

In its first year of operation, CTC Telcom claimed an 80% telephone and cable television market share in Barron, Wisconsin (2500 access line exchange). In Rice Lake (9000 access lines) and Chetek (3000) access lines, CTC Telcom serves 50% of the homes where construction is complete. As of year-end 2001, CTC Telcom served 7549 access lines. CTC Telcom has been designated an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier and participates in the federal Universal Service Support program. CTC Telcom works closely with the schools it serves to ensure they obtain support through the federal E-Rate program.

Rick will be the first to admit that the operation of a CLEC provides its own set of challenges, and he and CTC have been on the bleeding edge of the CLEC industry. CTC Telcom has faced municipal right-of-way issues, OVS certification, and interconnection arbitration. Rick has vast experience in interconnection issues, financing, regulatory issues, legislative issues, operations management, access charges, B&C, competitive marketing, and many other industry-related areas. He has appeared before state and national legislators and regulators to inform and educate them about CLEC issues.

Rick was one of the founding members of the Rural Independent Competitive Alliance (RICA), a national trade association for CLECs. He has served as the association's Vice President and currently serves as President. In addition, he serves on the advisory councils for CHR Solutions, the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) and the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative (RTFC). Rick is a Director on the Board of Celect Communications, a five-company CLEC venture. He also serves as a Director on the Board of Badger Communications, an equipment vendor company.

Rick's input has been sought as a member of Wisconsin's Senate Task Force for Telecommunications Reform and as a member of the National Telephone Cooperative Association (NTCA) Business and Technology Committee. Despite his many industry commitments, Rick maintains a hands-on, open door management style in his day-to-day management. He personally conducts employee focus groups and takes part in numerous employee/company activities.

Rick is also CEO of CTC Telcom's parent, Chibardun Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Dallas, Wisconsin, a position he has held since 1994. He has been employed at Chibardun Telephone for the past 24 years. Before becoming CEO, Rick served as the company's Central Office Supervisor and was also responsible for the operation of the company's cable television subsidiary.

Chibardun Telephone Cooperative, Inc., is an independent local telephone company, providing telecommunications services to six telephone exchanges in Northwestern Wisconsin. The company serves 6667 access lines and 2000 cable television subscribers. It is also the parent company to three subsidiaries: Chibardun Cable T.V Corporation, Chibardun RSA1 Cellular Partnership and CTC Telcom.